

Addressing “Excessive Teacher/Faculty Entitlement”: Recreating Identity Through Changing Perspectives and Social Relationship

Objective

The notion of “excessive faculty/teacher entitlement” is a new theme in teacher education which provides a term to conceptualize and uncover the sources of oppression that educators experience sometimes as victims and at other times, as perpetrators of it, though often unaware of their impact on others (Author & Craig, 2021). Excessive entitlement is expecting reward in excess of what one deserves hindering teachers/faculty from taking responsibility for their own actions, learning and change. It’s a pervasive and malignant issue that needs acknowledgement and investigative attention for promoting equity in education through development of self-awareness and personal and social adaptability.

Teachers are often relegated to the role of implementers of an externally imposed curriculum which fails to acknowledge them as persons and the values they hold close to their hearts as their “best loved self” (Schwab, 1954/1978; Craig, 2020). The projection of a deficit view of teachers makes “excessive teacher entitlement” seem like a volitional characteristic, pinning the blame on teachers as individuals unwilling or unable to adapt to changing needs rather than on the system and the cultural/social mores producing the toxicity.

We need to see teachers differently. Changing our narrative requires other ways of knowing that raise unsettling questions. Naming the phenomenon of “excessive teacher entitlement” can be seen as a provocation to present to consciousness our knowing of our experiences to which we have not yet applied our own mindedness (Dewey, 1908/19810).

Overview and significance

The symposium is a provocation to dialogue to spur our thinking towards more creative approach individually and collectively to issues of equity that education is repeatedly dogged by. The six participants from different geographical contexts, Jamaica, U.S., France, Iceland and India examine the extent to which they were aware of “excessive entitlement” in themselves and the other, and to what degree the idea grew on them--once a term was given the phenomenon.

Session Structure

Caught between conflicting agendas, the first contributor explores uncomfortable encounters with colleagues introspectively to unearth intertwined hegemonies in the academy. The second and third contributors use self-reflectivity as a tool to make sense of teachers’ putative “entitled behavior” in the context of diversity, albeit from different countries. The fourth presenter puts forth professional gestures as an opposite to excessive teacher entitlement in promoting the ethical principle of inclusive professionalism. The fifth presenter uses excessive entitlement as a lens to examine the power and position educators arrogate to themselves in judging co-workers. The final presenter addresses issues of excessive entitlement linked to prejudicial asymmetries in doctoral supervision.

Keywords: Excessive entitlement, oppression, unreasonable expectations, being self-reflexive, self-realization

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